



Office of Congressman Barney Frank

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Frank Responds to Senator Kyl's Threats to Leave "Super Committee" if Military Cuts are on the Table

WASHINGTON – Congressman Barney Frank today responded to a statement by Senator John Kyl (R-AZ) concerning his recent announcement that he would quit the budget "super committee" if other members push for cuts in military spending. Kyl's remarks are quoted in the [New York Times](#), the [Washington Post](#), the [Wall Street Journal](#), [Politico](#), the [Hill](#) and other publications.

Congressman Frank, [who has led Congressional efforts to reduce America's overseas military commitments](#) and to cut wasteful military spending, today released this statement:

Senator Minority Leader Mitch McConnell has already made it clear that his highest priority is to keep President Obama from succeeding. Now the second-ranking Republican in the Senate has stated that his primary goal is to prevent the adoption of any comprehensive deficit reduction package. The two obstructionist efforts obviously work together, since they will lead to a situation in which Senator McConnell will blame President Obama for the failure to achieve comprehensive deficit reductions for which Senator Kyl will be responsible.

Senator Kyl's announcement that he will quit the committee if it dares to consider any reduction in the nearly \$700 billion military budget – which at its current level includes funding for two wars, subsidies for our European allies in NATO, and acknowledged inefficiencies in procurement – is, if taken seriously, a declaration that there will be no deficit reduction package. The position of Senator Kyl – and presumably of Senator McConnell who appointed him – apparently is that we can cut back on Social Security and Medicare, fail to fund necessary improvements to our bridges, highways and rails, cut medical research, and cut local law enforcement, but that we cannot even contemplate any further reductions to a military budget that makes America the subsidizer of the social safety net of all of our wealthy allies, none of which spend any significant percentage of their own economies on the military because they can rely on us to protect them.

Whatever one thinks of the merits of military cuts, the announcement by the number two Republican that he will blow up the committee's deliberations rather than to accept any reductions at all in the current proposed level of military spending obviously means that there is no chance for any agreement. If Senator Kyl sticks to this position, it will be clear that efforts at further deficit reduction will fail, and that the responsibility for that will be the sort of intransigence on behalf of distorted spending priorities that Senator Kyl so proudly proclaims.